

ROYAL ITALIAN EMBASSY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
MAR 3 1931  
DIVISION OF  
WESTERN AFFAIRS  
*File  
1. ack'd  
2. copy to  
Committee  
Jag/mg*

PM RECD



MAR-231

March 6 1931.

GC

865B.623/1

The Italian Ambassador presents his compliments to His Excellency the Secretary of State and has the honor to inform him that, under date of July 20th, 1930, the American Committee of the "International Wild Life Protection" addressed from Cambridge, Massachusetts, the letter, copy of which is herewith enclosed, concerning smuggling of Rhinoceros horn in the region between the Kenya Colony and Italian Somaliland.

The Governor of Italian Somaliland to whom the letter of the said American Committee was in due time communicated, has replied to the Italian Ministry of Colonies by his note of December 3rd, a translation of which is attached.

Upon the request of his government, the Italian Ambassador has the honor to request His Excellency the Secretary of State to be so kind as to have the contents of the letter from the Governor of the Italian Somaliland brought to the knowledge of the "American Committee of the International Wild Life Protection".

The Ambassador has the honor to express in advance his best thanks.

Washington, D.C. February 26, 1931.

MAR 6 - 1931

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COPIA

INTERNATIONAL WILD LIFE PROTECTION  
American Committee

July 30, 1930.

His Excellency Benito Mussolini  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Roma (Italy)

Your Excellency,

There are in the United States a great many sportsmen and naturalists interested in the protection of the great game animals of Africa. Among those animals which are fast vanishing are the black and White Rhinoceros. You undoubtedly are aware that the horns of both these species have at present a considerable and apparently increasing commercial value (probably mostly for use as medicine in China).

This search to supply a market has lead to the illegal slaughter of a great many of these animals, largely in British possessions as the Rhino is not plentiful in Italian Somaliland.

The demand for horns has lead to the smuggling of large numbers by way of Italian territory. In January 1930 a visitor to Kisumu found the whole of the floor of the custom house covered with Rhinoceros horns, many of them from recent kills. As these animals are very scarce within Italian territory it seems almost certain that most of these had been illegally shot in Kenya Colony and exported across the Italian border. It is of course as you realize very difficult if not impossible to prevent these activities.

The same thing applies perhaps in a lesser degree to elephant ivory.

May we respectfully suggest that the enlightened and progressive government of Italy prohibit all dealings in ivory and in Rhino Horns, except that purchased from government sources and from animals killed legally under the licences granted for that purpose.

We feel that such a policy, if strictly enforced, might go far towards solving the problem of preserving one of Africa's most remarkable forms of animal life for the benefit of future generations.

We should explain that this letter comes to you from an organization which represents some of the strongest sentiment for international wild life conservation in the United States. This Committee which coordinates American activities in this work is composed of representatives of leading scientific institutions and organizations interested in conservation.

We believe this matter is of sufficient importance to warrant calling it to your personal attention.

Yours very truly,

(n-----)

TRANSLATION

SOMALIA ITALIANA  
Dir.ne Aff. Econ. e Finanz.

Mogadiscio, 3 December 1931, IX.

In Re: Protection of Wild Animals.

I have taken knowledge of the letter sent me with the note No. 48489 AO of October 8th, 1930 concerning a communication of the International Wild Life Protection Association.

This Government rigidly carries out in the matter, the provisions adopted at the London Convention of May 19, 1900 for the protection of animal life in Africa and therefore it does all in its power to perserve the species of animals contemplated by the said convention, as it appears from the regulations governing hunting in Italian Somaliland.

Inasmuch as concerns the killing of animals in the Kenya Colony and the smuggling of ivory and Rhinoceros horn in this Colony, there are, as known, negotiations under way with the Government of the said English Colony, intended to prevent, within the possible limits, such smuggling. I shall not fail to inform in due course the Ministry of Colonies of the result of these dealings on the part of this Government which is well disposed to cooperate with the Government of the English Colony for the protection of the species which interest the Association mentioned above.

The Governor

sgd: Corni

INTERNATIONAL WILD LIFE PROTECTION

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March 10, 1931.

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Division of Western European Affairs,  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

In reply to your letter of March 6th (WE 865B.623/1) I wish to acknowledge with gratitude on behalf of the American Committee the receipt of the letter from the Governor of Italian Somaliland to the Italian Ministry of Colonies.

/ Thanking you for the trouble you have taken in this matter,

Sincerely yours,

*Harold J. Coolidge, Jr.*

HJC:EG

MAR 14 1931

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865B.623/2

# DOCUMENT FILE

## NOTE

865B.623/3

SEE 648t.65b31 Game Trophies/1 FOR # -

FROM Great Britain ( Atherton ) DATED Jan.12,1933  
TO NAME 1-1127 ...

REGARDING: Game trophies, Agreement between Great Britain and Italy  
regarding the control of traffic in - across the frontier  
between Kenya and Italian Somaliland.

Central File: Decimal File 865B.623, Internal Affairs Of States, Animal Husbandry., Somaliland, Wild Animals. Game Laws., March 6, 1931 - January 12, 1933. March 6, 1931 - January 12, 1933. MS European Colonialism in the Early 20th Century. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, [link.gale.com/apps/doc/FSC5109731406/FGDSC?u=3Domni&sid=3Dbookmark-GDSC](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/FSC5109731406/FGDSC?u=3Domni&sid=3Dbookmark-GDSC). Accessed 18 June 2025.